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Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-05 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AF-10
ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 /127 W
----------096248 291205Z /44
R 290900Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8417
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORG, SN
SUBJ: PRE-UNGA CONSULTATIONS: WELLS-PETREE VISIT TO SINGAPORE

REF: STATE 182738

1. AUGUST 26 CONSULTATIONS WITH MFA OFFICIALS, LED BY GOS AMBASSADOR TO UN TOMMY KOH, COVERED FOUR GENERAL SUBJECTS: UN RE-STRUCTURING, HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISM IN UN, POLITICAL QUESTIONS, AND GOS PROBLEMS WITH RECENT DOUBLING OF ITS UN ASSESSMENT. KOH MENTIONED THAT ASEAN COUNTRY REPS WILL BE MEETING IN SINGAPORE SEPTEMBER 5-6 TO COORDINATE VIEWS ON ISSUES LIKELY TO ARISE IN UNGA.

2. UN RESTRUCTURING. IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR WELL'S REMARKS ON NEED FOR RESTRUCTURING UN SYSTEM, ESPECIALLY IN AREA OF ECONOMIC AGENCIES, KOH SAID HE AGREED WITH
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EXPERT GROUP'S REPORT THAT UN SYSTEM IS UNWIELDY AND CHAOTIC BUT ADDED THAT RESTRAINTS OF G-77 MEMBERSHIP PREVENT HIM FROM DOING MUCH TO PROMOTE REPORT. HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN IN SOME DETAIL THE PROBLEMS A RE-STRUCTURING EFFORT, ESPECIALLY ONE BASED ON REPORT, IS RUNNING INTO. RESISTANCE HAS BUILT UP BOTH IN UN BUREAUCRACY AND AMONG LDCS. BUREAUCRATS IN SECRETARIAT

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AND ELSEWHERE SEEK TO EXPAND, NOT TO ELIMINATE OR MERGE THEIR OFFICES. LDCS SUSPECT THAT REPORT IS DEVELOPED COUNTRY EFFORT AIMED AT DIMINISHING THEIR (LDC) DOMINANCE IN SOME UN AGENCIES AND COMMITTEES. THEY PLACE VERY LOW PRIORITY ON RESTRUCTURING (MOST DELEGATIONS HAVE NOT READ REPORT), AND CONSIDER QUESTIONS DISTRACTING FROM THEIR MAJOR INTERESTS. KOH QUESTIONED IDEA OF A DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR UN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BECAUSE HE SEES LITTLE CHANCE THAT INCUMBENT, WHOEVER HE MIGHT BE, COULD ACHIEVE REAL LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION. CHIEF OF MFA ECONOMIC DIVISION NOTED THAT LDCS WANT TO SEE A CLEARER COMMITMENT BY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO THEIR BREAD AND BUTTER DEMANDS BEFORE THEY WILL SERIOUSLY CONSIDER RESTRUCTURING.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS IN UN. THE SUBJECT WAS RAISED WITH K.C. LEE, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE IN MFA, AND ELICITED RATHER DEFENSIVE EXPLANATION OF SINGAPORE'S DETENTION POLICY. IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING, CHIEF OF MFA MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS OFFICE MICHAEL CHEOK SAID IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER IS "DEAD DUCK". HE ADDED THAT VIEWS OF SOME LDC REPS ARE STILL COLORED BY REACTIONS TO US STATEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THIRD COMMITTEE IN 1975.

4. POLITICAL ISSUES. IN RESPONSE TO PETREE'S OUTLINE OF US EXPECTATIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST IN UNGA, KOH SAID HE APPRECIATED DRAMATIC CHANGE IN US POLICY TOWARD
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SOUTH AFRICAN PROBLEMS, BUT ADDED THAT US MAY FIND NON-ALIGNED GROUP'S DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON SUBJECT TROUBLESOME (E.G., THEY MAY CONDEMN US ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT). MODERATES, SUCH AS GOS, WILL TRY TO TONE DOWN SUCH RESOLUTIONS, BUT THEY MAY FAIL, AND US MAY NOT BE ABLE TO VOTE WITH G-77. KOH ASKED WHETHER WE EXPECTED CUBA TO PUSH PUERTO RICO AND GUAM ISSUE IN UNGA AND WAS TOLD WE DID NOT. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER US WOULD ACCEPT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 AND WAS TOLD WE WOULD NOT.

5. GOS UN ASSESSMENT. SINGAPORE'S UN ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN RAISED BY 100 PERCENT. GOS IS THINKING OF SEEKING IN FIFTH COMMITTEE EXCEPTION ON GROUNDS THAT PER CAPITA GNP IS NOT A REASONABLE CRITERION AS APPLIED TO SINGAPORE BECAUSE OF LARGE SHARE CONTRIBUTED BY MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND OTHER FACTORS UNIQUE TO SINGAPORE. GOS RECOGNIZES THAT GETTING EXCEPTION WOULD BE UP-HILL STRUGGLE, BUT MAINTENANCE OF LDC STATUS IS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO SINGAPORE FOR REASONS OTHER THAN COST OF ASSESSMENT.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770810/aaaaaiis.tel
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 182738
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1398481
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRE-UNGA CONSULTATIONS: WELLS-PETREE VISIT TO SINGAPORE
TAGS: PORG, SN
To: SECSTATE WASHDC BANGKOK MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f5aa8c4e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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